

Date: Fri, 8 Oct 93 04:30:15 PDT
From: Ham-Policy Mailing List and Newsgroup <ham-policy@ucsd.edu>
Errors-To: Ham-Policy-Errors@UCSD.Edu
Reply-To: Ham-Policy@UCSD.Edu
Precedence: Bulk
Subject: Ham-Policy Digest V93 #368
To: Ham-Policy

Ham-Policy Digest Fri, 8 Oct 93 Volume 93 : Issue 368

Today's Topics:

 Codeless Tech Debate
 Enough of the debate.
 Getting my license. Do I want to be like this?
 If you're going to fight about it, spell it correctly!
 Temporary ID's?

Send Replies or notes for publication to: <Ham-Policy@UCSD.Edu>
Send subscription requests to: <Ham-Policy-REQUEST@UCSD.Edu>
Problems you can't solve otherwise to brian@ucsd.edu.

Archives of past issues of the Ham-Policy Digest are available
(by FTP only) from UCSD.Edu in directory "mailarchives/ham-policy".

We trust that readers are intelligent enough to realize that all text
herein consists of personal comments and does not represent the official
policies or positions of any party. Your mileage may vary. So there.

Date: Tue, 5 Oct 1993 11:23:45 GMT
From: news.service.uci.edu!paris.ics.uci.edu!csulb.edu!library.ucla.edu!agate!
howland.reston.ans.net!paladin.american.edu!darwin.sura.net!perot.mtsu.edu!raider!
theporch!jackatak!root@network.ucsd
Subject: Codeless Tech Debate
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

Oooops! This got pretty long.... sorry...

bodoh@dgg.cr.usgs.gov (Tom Bodoh) writes:

> In article <1993Sep27.183223.5773@pony.Ingres.COM>, garys@Ingres.COM (Gary Sw
> |> Amem... I just passed the 13wpm test and upgraded my tech+ (ticket pending
> |> to a general. Although it took alot of effort to learn the 13, I have
> |> the satisfaction of accomplishment.
> Congratulations!

To you both, and welcome to Ham Radio... I think, with 1,000 hobbies
rolled into one, that Ham Radio is the BEST hobby on the planet.

> I am also working on upgrading and plan to take the code
> tests as long as they are required, despite my opinion that anything over
> 13 WPM (or even over 5 WPM) is overkill.

Let us examine the facts a little (I know, I am way late in posting a
reply -- today is 10/5/93 and this was posted last week, but my node
is a leaf way out on the branches of the InterNet "tree" and is served
indirectly...)

I applaud you, Tom, for recognizing that the requirement for a CW
proficiency exists (and I applaud you, Gary, for studying and finding
success in upgrading to General). However, I really think that if one
were to construct a visual chart, that virtually anyone who has learned
to differentiate the dits from the dahs (not entirely a trivial skill
as several people on the 'Net have pointed out ;^) could LOOK UP the
characters at 5 wpm and translate the message from Morse to plain
text. That would NOT, in most people's view constitute "proficiency",
and I say that not from the "Old Buzzard" (which I am told I am by
definition ;^) viewpoint, but from the perspective of a teacher, long
time amateur, and sympathetic posture.

I hurt every time I read of the effort put in by folks like Jim
Bromley (I hope I have your name right, Jim) who has been trying for
30 plus YEARS without success. I am sure there is a way to help him,
but I do not see the magic "pill" nor do I know what it is...

> I don't think that any of us who are pushing for a decreased code requirement
> want it done just to reduce the effort involved in upgrading.
I'll not quarrel with your statement, Tom, but it certainly *sounds*
like it to many older hams. I will not attempt to justify their
feelings, nor iterate them here, but I think they are as valid as
your arguments about "relevance"...

> What most of us are saying is that CW is not of sufficient
> RELEVANCE in ham radio that we need to master it, when FAMILIARITY would
> be sufficient.

I really believe that competence lies between familiarity (which may
be the ability to describe, generally, the Morse Code) and mastery,
which may be too strict a standard. Proficiency is required, in
accordance with the treaty, and in accordance with the FCC view of
their responsibility as "stewards" of the amateur frequencies and
service.

> I just have a mental block when it comes to learning
> something that I will never need.

No tired old argument about tapping wires together, but it is
interesting to me that one as new as you to amateur radio, Tom, as you
seem to be (I have been reading this hierarchy for lots longer than
you have been a ham) can make a pronouncement as far-reaching and

absolute as "something I will never need" based upon what has to be limited exposure to HF. I will not attempt to cite all the times or reasons you might "need" CW, because I do not feel *they* are relevant to the argument, either. That is NOT what this debate is about, and I sense you know that...

> Things have changed since the emphasis on code
> was justified by the important role that code played in radio. Code is
> no longer that important.

Just as fire-starting, since the development of matches and "BIC" lighters, could be argued as no longer relevant to teaching Boy Scouts, particularly those from urban areas. It is still an important aspect of the learning process, just as CW is for hams. The argument that not everyone uses CW once licensed for HF is a red-herring, because that has ALWAYS been the way... I know people who have run RTTY for twenty years and NEVER speak on the air... (don't use CW either ;^)... so what? Show me where that argument is relevant.

> I would not (at this time) suggest that all code testing should be dropped
> entirely. I do think that it is time to drop at least the 20 WPM test and
> possibly the 13 WPM test.

I think there will be more support for this if a plan is developed to implement it in such a way as to satisfy the (unreasonable) feelings of the long licensed amateurs who want to hold on to some of the traditions. CW is just the touchstone of the Amateur Service, and to throw away the primary icon is to defile the hobby.

> |> Has anyone considered this:

> |> 1) CW has the narrowest bandwidth.

> No argument there. But you must also consider that due to the narrow
> bandwidth, the speed is severely limited in comparison to other modes.

I am compelled to ask, what is the hurry? This is a hobby, not a news service for profit. Why are we so concerned about SPEED when the hobby aspects permit lots of different transmission/reception modes? We are no longer passing much (any?) traffic voice or CW -- most of that is handled by auto-forwarding packet links that do not even require an operator! It has become accepted as part of the hobby, but the computer-to-computer nature of those packet contacts, with no real need for an operator to facilitate (in fact, the human SLOWS down the process) runs contrary to the basic concept of the hobby, and represents the "warm nose of the camel"...which many fear will ruin the hobby.

> |> 2) CW is the International language for radio communications.

> Not for long. Many/most governments are discontinuing any code operations
> and many ships are not equipped for anything other than voice.

Ah, and here your newness is showing a little too much. That governments no longer require CW for shipboard communications, and

different NON-AMATEUR services are removing the requirement is NOT relevant to amateur radio as a hobby. It is true that you will probably hear CW mostly on the ham bands in five years, but it is equally true that CW is still a vital (living) and vibrant language among international hams. Not everyone on the air speaks "English", and among those for whom that is native tongue, there are so many dialectics and differences as to render even English as hardly common or universal.

CW, however, *is* universal among hams, and for those who do not speak the same language as the operator on the other end -- say Japanese on one end and Serbian on the other -- CW with the Q-signals and generally accepted and widely known standard abbreviations, is one good way for those two to communicate, even the most basic information: name, location (everyone needs to answer the most frequently asked question of all: "How far can you get with that radio?") signal report, and basics about the station. This is not communication of high level personal philosophy, but it is two people sharing a hobby and interests, and it is the best start we have for developing understandings that lead to mutually acceptance.

> that it's time to stop "propping up" code by forcing the unwilling to
> learn it. Let it stand or fall on its own merit.
It does, and the fact that there are LOTS of CW QSOs in progress right now as you read this on several bands is good evidence.

> |> 3) In an emergency, a CW xmitter can be built easier and faster than
> |> any other type of xmitter - like from a TV set.
> That's fine for McGiver, but you'd be hard pressed to find a recent example
> where this has been necessary.
Agreed.

> You would be hard pressed to find an
> extra that could do that today.
I do not think that is relevant, Tom. I will not point out that using the older parts and technology that I still could, because that is not addressing the issue, and is a red-herring: both the argument that building the CW xmit/rcvr is simpler AND the "only Old Buzzards could do that and no one can now." BOTH are irrelevant, and neither will wash.

> The equipment is so complicated that we no
> longer have the skills, knowledge or tools to work on it.
I disagree. I believe there are LOTS of hams with the tools, the skills, and the knowledge. However, I believe that with today's pressures and pace, that damn few actually pursue the construction, design, or repair of rigs as their expression of the hobby... that does not mean the skills and knowledge are missing... just the time or

continues.

I don't expect that it will end regardless of any petitions or FCC actions.

Anyone willing to compose a coherent petition to the FCC on the subject this time?

--

Mike Waters rcrw90@email.mot.com AA4MW@KC7Y.PHX.AZ.US.NA

Date: Thu, 07 Oct 1993 10:52:43 -0700

From: ftpbox!mothost!schbbs!node_142cf.aieg.mot.com!user@uunet.uu.net

Subject: Getting my license. Do I want to be like this?

To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

In article <CEHJBD.C5s@pica.army.mil>, mellis@ramcad.pica.army.mil (Mark Ellis) wrote:

> In article <93279.103028SUSEEA@MAINE.MAINE.EDU>, <SUSEEA@MAINE.MAINE.EDU> writes:

> > Some hams here

> > will not even speak to a no code license. Some have gone to the

> > extent of willfull interference when they come across no code

> > operators on the repeater.

>

> Of course, I'm license-in-waiting (3 weeks down, ? to go). Once I get

> the ticket, start talking, and encounter such a brain-dead, elitist ham

> such as described above, I may be less enthusiastic about the hobby

> than I am now. Hope not.

Many years ago when there was only a General class license (well there was Advanced and Extra but they carried no privileges) there was an infamous individual in NY state who would spend all day (no kidding) calling "CQ A1 operators only No kids no lids no school bus riders ..."

Anyone who replied was told that they didn't qualify for one reason or another (of course) then he would go back to his litany including some derogatory reference to whoever called him.

He did this for some 10 years until he died - I am told from unrelated causes :-)

Then came the Novice license, Tech. licenses, and Incentive licensing etc., each time there was a few nuts who "wouldn't have anything to do with those ...".

My point is that this is neither new nor typical. Just like in any other situation you just ignore them and go to another channel. One of the really nice things about ham radio is that there are so many different things to do and frequencies to try.

>

> As far as willful interference, you might want to ask the person
> who holds the license of the repeater if they are aware of
> this. They may not be too thrilled with it either.

Most repeaters have a DFing committee who can jump on this sort of activity quite effectively.

--

Mike Waters rcrw90@email.mot.com AA4MW@KC7Y.PHX.AZ.US.NA

Date: Thu, 07 Oct 93 17:23:08 CDT

From: mvb.saic.com!unogate!news.service.uci.edu!usc!elroy.jpl.nasa.gov!swrinde!menudo.uh.edu!jpunix!unkaphaed!amanda!robert@network.ucsd.edu

Subject: If you're going to fight about it, spell it correctly!

To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

cowan@rubicon.org (Darin Cowan) writes:

> In article <1993Oct3.152402.25634@mnemosyne.cs.du.edu> rcanders@nyx.UUCP (Mr.
>

> >Just because you love Morris doesn't not make it a good reason for
> >_everyone_ to want to use it.

>

> Morris was a cat that was used in advertisements for cat food. Morris is now
> dead as a doornail, having expired a few years ago.

>

> Morse was a man who developed a method of encoding the alphabet, numbers and
> punctuation for telegraphy. That code bears his name today, and is most
> commonly used in HF amateur radio.

>

> Repeat after me:

> Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse
> not Morris

>

> or, for Morse code types:

>

> beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beep beeeeeep beep
> beep beep beep beep

>

>
> beeeeeep beep beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep
>
>
> beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beeeeeep beep beeeeeep beep
> beep beeeeeep beep beep beep beep beep beep
>
> Whether the utility of Morse code is such that it warrants the mandatory
> license requirement for access to HF is another issue - one that is unlikely
> to be solved in this forum due to the polarization of opinions here. It
> really looks silly, however, when people on both sides of the debate (a debat
> which has centred around the intellectual capacity of code and no-code
> types) CANNOT EVEN SPELL THE NAME OF THE ISSUE AT HAND! That reflects poorly
> on all hams, whether they have code or not.
>

I *second* the motion.

--Robert

Date: Thu, 07 Oct 1993 11:14:32 -0700
From: ftpbox!mothost!schbbs!node_142cf.aieg.mot.com!user@uunet.uu.net
Subject: Temporary ID's?
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

In article <CEIHK0.FvL@mentor.cc.purdue.edu>, blumb@sage.cc.purdue.edu
(Bill Blum) wrote:

> If, when I do get my call, (providing they don't run out of N9??? calls),
> and I -like- it, when I upgrade, do I have to perpetually give my call as
> N9???/KG, etc. when on General portions of the bands, or do I get to stick
> to my normal call when I get the new license in the mail?
>
> Replies via email please.

This is of general interest so I think posting is justified.

No, once you get the upgraded license in your hands you go back to your
"old" call with the new privilages if that is what you choose.

The temporary identifier simply serves to tell the FCC monitoring station
that you won't be found in their database as a General or whatever. I
assume that they simply put you on a "special" list of some sort and check
that your paperwork really does arrive at the FCC within the specified
time.

> Bill Blum blumb@sage.cc.purdue.edu Purdue University, W. Lafayette, IN
> N9???--- I passed the test...now I'm counting down.....

Congratulations, I look forward to talking to you on the air.

Seems like I say that a lot these days - one of the really nice things
about being a VE :-)

--

Mike Waters rcrw90@email.mot.com AA4MW@KC7Y.PHX.AZ.US.NA

Date: 8 Oct 93 02:15:43 GMT
From: munnari.oz.au!metro!news.ci.com.au!eram!dave@uunet.uu.net
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

References <30CT93.04522986@skyfox>, <19930ct3.152402.25634@mnemosyne.cs.du.edu>,
<19930ct6.213537.9941@rubicon.org>news.ci
Subject : Re: If you're going to fight about it, spell it correctly!

In article <19930ct6.213537.9941@rubicon.org>,
cowan@rubicon.org (Darin Cowan) writes:

| Morse was a man who developed a method of encoding the alphabet, numbers and
| punctuation for telegraphy. That code bears his name today, and is most
| commonly used in HF amateur radio.

Actually, very few people use the code developed by Sammy Morse, and
its use on the Amateur bands is probably illegal.

| Repeat after me:
| Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse Morse
| not Morris

Ummm, has it occurred to you that people are doing this deliberately,
to stir up people like you?

--

Dave Horsfall (VK2KFU) VK2KFU @ VK2RWI.NSW.AUS.OC PGP 2.3
dave@esi.COM.AU ...munari!esi.COM.AU!dave available

End of Ham-Policy Digest V93 #368
